

Ludwig and Frances Leix House II
210-12 14th Street
Fourth Ward Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5865

HABS
PA,
7-ALTO,
61-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
LUDWIG AND FRANCES LEIX HOUSE II

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Location: 210-12 14th Street

Date of Erection: 1903

Description: Built at the back of a corner lot facing the street rather than avenue front, the Leix double house is typical, both in situation and in type, of most Fourth Ward double houses-- similar, in fact, to many found throughout Altoona.

This two-and-one-half-story, cross-gable frame house is arranged as two reversed units sharing a party wall. The two-bay units are clearly distinct, each having an entrance door toward the party wall paired with a tripled parlor window with fan transom. A shared front porch with side entrances has four evenly spaced columnar supports and a stone foundation. Overall visual unity is maintained through the shared cross gable with its central paired window, the small gable centered in the front porch roof, and by the symmetrically placed, enclosed chimneys, one for each unit. The house is currently covered with (replacement) horizontal wood siding, and there are lattice shutters on the second-floor front windows.

History: This property--part of the same original parcel as 1329 3rd Avenue--was purchased by Ludwig Leix, a blacksmith, from John A. Wright in 1876. The Leix family house was built almost immediately, in 1876-77, on the front section of the lot facing 3rd Avenue. The rear of the lot remained empty until 1903 when Leix was taxed for a half-lot and house at 1329 3rd Ave. as well as a half-lot and double house, valued at \$2,000, with an address of 208 and 210 14th St.

Because this was always a rental property, it is hard to identify early inhabitants. In 1939, Howard, Florence E., and Frances Ayres lived at No. 210. Howard worked as a fireman. William H. Gross, a janitor, lived at No. 212 with his wife, Sarah D., and Anna S. Gross, a widow.

Leix's children transferred the property to Sarah Gross in August 1941. In that year the Ayres had moved and were replaced by Carl J. Glasshauser who had no listed occupation. Sarah Gross died in 1958 and widower William H. sold it to the current owner for \$2,250 in 1962.

Sources: Maps: 1894, 1909. Deed books: 35/192, 469/177, 800/543. City directories. Tax assessment records.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. Overviews of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and the fourth ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5786) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.